

REPORT TO CABINET

Open/Exempt		Would any decisions proposed :		
Any especially affected Wards No	Mandatory/	(a) Be entirely within cabinet's powers to decide YES/NO		
	Discretionary /	(b) Need to be recommendations to Council		YES/NO
	Operational	(c) Be partly for recommendations to Council and partly within Cabinets powers –		YES/NO
Lead Member: Cllr Elizabeth Nockolds E-mail: cldr.Elizabeth.Nockolds@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted:		
		Other Members consulted:		
Lead Officer: Lorraine Gore E-mail: Lorraine.gore@west-norfolk.gov.uk Direct Dial: (01553) 616432		Other Officers consulted: Sarah Dennis		
Financial Implications YES/NO	Policy/Personnel Implications YES/NO	Statutory Implications YES/NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES/NO

Date of meeting: 8th January 2018

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE SCHEME

Summary

This report seeks Cabinet approval to include Social Enterprises (SE's) and Community Interest Companies (CIC's) in the list of organisations eligible to apply to the Borough Council's Financial Assistance Scheme.

Recommendations

1. Cabinet is recommended to approve the addition of Social Enterprises and Community Interest Companies eligible to apply to the Financial Assistance Scheme.
2. Cabinet is recommended to give delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (S151) Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health to approve future minor amendments to the eligibility and award criteria of the Council's Financial Assistance scheme.

Reason for Decision

To ensure the Scheme is completely inclusive.

1.0 Background

1.1 The Borough Council operates a Financial Assistance Scheme to support local community groups, split between Service Level Agreements and a Small Grants Scheme. The budget allocated for 2018/2019 for the Small Grants element is:

- Capital projects £50,000
- Revenue projects £14,200
- Special 'themed' annual fund £4,000

1.2 The Financial Assistance Scheme is administered on the Council's behalf by the Norfolk Community Foundation with grant awards decided by the Portfolio Holder for Health, Culture and the Community, in consultation with the Executive Director – Finance. Local community groups must apply for funds and demonstrate that they meet pre-set criteria. (*See background paper attached*). The grants allocated are published after each award process as a Member Delegated Decision.

Currently, those eligible to apply to the Small Grants Fund are:

- Charities
- Constituted voluntary and community groups

1.3 Other statutory organisations, for example schools, along with social enterprises, community interest companies and Town and Parish Councils are unable to apply to the Fund. Town and Parish Councils are excluded because they are able to raise funds through their local parish precept. Organisations in receipt of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Council are also ineligible to apply to the Fund. Town and Parish Councils and those in receipt of an SLA were eligible to apply to the themed fund for the commemoration of the end of World War 1, however.

1.4 The Financial Assistance Scheme has not included CIC's or SE's as being eligible in the Scheme criteria in the past as they are very much run on a commercial basis and are run to generate surpluses. However, grant funding can often be critical to these groups when setting up. All CIC's and SE's must also make it very clear how they intend to benefit the community.

1.5 SE's and CIC's are both run for public good. SE's have a social or environmental purpose at the heart of the business and will reinvest profits into the enterprise. CIC's have a very particular legal structure and their community benefit is clearly defined. A CIC must be very clear in how they will benefit their community and use of any profits or surpluses.

1.6 An added protection for SE's and CIC's is that they must all have an 'asset lock' in place. This means that assets are to be used for the benefit of the community and if the enterprise is ever wound up, the assets must be transferred to another asset locked body.

1.7 If the Borough Council's Financial Assistance Scheme were to fund CIC's and SE's then Norfolk Community Foundation would check all applications not only in accordance with the Council's existing terms and conditions, but also against their guidance for CIC's and SE's (*see background paper attached*).

1.8 Breckland District Council allows CIC's and SE's to apply for funding from their Grants Scheme, and use Norfolk Community Foundation's guidance when assessing applications. Other neighbouring authorities such as North Norfolk and Broadland also fund CIC's and SE's as part of their Grant Schemes.

2.0 Policy Implications

Financial Assistance Scheme will include Community Interest Companies and Social Enterprises.

3.0 Financial Implications

None. The Scheme may receive an increased number of applications, but the Scheme budget remains unchanged.

4.0 Staffing Implications

None.

5.0 Statutory Considerations

None.

6.0 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

Pre Screening attached.

7.0 Risk Management

None.

8.0 Background Papers

- Borough Council Financial Assistance Scheme criteria.
- Norfolk Community Foundation additional criteria in place for Community Interest Companies and Social Enterprises.

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function	Financial Assistance – Small Grants Scheme				
Is this a new or existing policy/ service/function?	New / Existing (delete as appropriate)				
Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened. Please state if this policy/service rigidly constrained by statutory obligations	A small budget is available for local community and voluntary groups to apply for funding, under the guidance of set criteria, to improve community facilities. The Scheme is administered by Norfolk Community Foundation, with grant award decisions made by Borough Council Officers and Members. It is not a statutory function.				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			X	
	Disability			X	
	Gender			X	
	Gender Re-assignment			X	
	Marriage/civil partnership			X	
	Pregnancy & maternity			X	
	Race			X	
	Religion or belief			X	
	Sexual orientation			X	
	Other (eg low income)			X	
Question	Answer	Comments			
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	Yes / No	No- any constituted group can apply for funding. Providing the function for which they are applying for benefits the community, and meets the Scheme criteria, then any group can apply. This report recommends extending the Scheme still further.			
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	Yes-/ No	Every application has to demonstrate a clear benefit to the community so grants will only ever improve a community and its facilities.			
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	Yes-/ No	Some projects will do this through their activities, but this is not a specific requirement of the Scheme.			
<p>5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section</p>	Yes-/ No	Actions:			
		Actions agreed by EWG member:			
Assessment completed by: Name SARAH DENNIS					
Job title: PARTNERSHIPS & FUNDING OFFICER	Date: 5th December 2018				

Please Note: If there are any positive or negative impacts identified in question 1, or there any 'yes' responses to questions 2 – 4 a full impact assessment will be required.